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VISIT OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS FROM U.S.A. WITH CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN U.S.S.R. PROPOSED

Action was taken by the General Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., on June 8 in New York, enabling the President, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, in consultation with the Board's Policy and Strategy Committee to take steps toward a proposed conference of Christian leaders from the United States with Christian leaders in the Soviet Union. The declared purpose would be to afford an exchange of views concerning "the life and work of the churches in the two countries, including the efforts of the churches to achieve a just and durable peace."

This action was taken in response to an appeal for consultations which was made by the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston last August. It urged representatives of the churches to "visit one another so that they may gain understanding of one another, and of the countries in which they live, and thus strengthen the bonds of fellowship and promote reconciliation of the nations."

The Board was informed of several consultations that have been held between the religious leaders of the East and the West during the past three years and of others that are now being planned. It was reported that a visit to Russia is under way by the American Friends Service Committee and that a delegation of Baptists, including three Americans, has been invited to visit Russia. Russian church leaders have accepted an invitation to visit England; that invitation was extended by the British Council of Churches headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Netherlands Ecumenical Council is sending four Protestant clergymen to the Soviet capital this month for conference with Christian leaders there.

What further steps are taken will depend on the result of study as authorized by the General Board, Dr. Blake said. He also pointed out that "obviously the value of such a consultation requires agreement at the planning stage by both parties - the leaders of the National Council and Christian leaders in Russia.

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MEETING "AT THE SUMMIT" OF BIG FOUR POWERS PLANNED FOR GENEVA, BEGINNING JULY 18

On the rising tide of many recent important international events and trends, and after much exchanging of notes, arrangements have now been agreed on for a meeting of the heads of state of the U.S.A., Britain, France, and the U.S.S.R. to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, opening July 18. While President Eisenhower has indicated his wish to have the meetings be short, the Soviet Government has expressed concern that haste might cause overlooking some of the main purposes of such conference. In any case, this is conceived to be only one meeting in a long series. In preparation for it, the Foreign Ministers will meet at San Francisco during the celebration of the signing of the UN Charter, the week of June 19. After the heads of state have met, it is understood that the foreign ministers and experts in special fields from these nations will have committed to them the continuing issues which must be resolved step by step through days and years to come.

Without editorializing at length on this coming event, it is in order to point out certain views and attitudes widely held among the churches which are relevant to it: The churches have favored negotiation as an honorable process, the only alternative to the bloody arbitrament of war which ultimately does not solve but only creates more and worse problems in addition to its sinful death and devastation. The churches have expressed support for the basic policy of our Government when it has been that of courageous, patient, persistent pursuit of peace with justice; they will continue to have confidence in the representatives of our government following that policy and will give to them the necessary sense of flexibility and support for such delicate yet vast negotiations as are in prospect. The churches, in the long perspective of faith, would caution against over-optimism or despairing pessimism, but would encourage seeing this historic meeting as only one significant step in the long, wearying, yet challenging path; the way lies ahead through alternating tensions and negotiations for the foreseeable future if war is to be avoided and the semblance of peace is to be maintained by dynamic processes. The churches, holding faith in the God who works through history yet rules above and beyond "the summit" of all human power, would commend the representatives of the nations to Almighty God in continuing prayer that this meeting, the meetings to precede and follow, and the continuing relationships of all nations large and small, as in the United Nations, may make for more of justice and of peace on the earth.

WOULD YOU LIKE A "PERSONAL INTRODUCTION"? COME TO THE UNITED NATIONS THIS SUMMER

"Introduction to the United Nations" is a new one-hour program at the UN Headquarters in New York to acquaint the visiting public with the activities of the UN. The program consists of a 30 minute lecture and question period conducted by the UN Visitors' Service and a 20 minute showing of UN films in Conference Room 4. It is given without charge for all visitors every day except Christmas and New Year's Day. A recent report indicates that some 4,500 visitors passed through the UN buildings in one day. This visitors' "Introduction" is important both to them and to the UN, for these are part of the people to whom the governments' representatives in the UN are ultimately responsible. These visitors are part of the people of the world who want to live in peace. Summer visitors to New York are encouraged to set time for a personal introduction to the UN.

ATOMS-FOR-PEACE PROGRAMS TO BE CLIMAXED BY UN CONFERENCE, AUGUST 8-20, AT GENEVA

Marking ten years of nuclear fission developments somewhat known to the public, with much news of these now in press and periodicals, a United Nations Conference on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy is planned for Geneva, Switzerland, August 8-20. Scientists of 60 nations will participate with 950 papers submitted instead of 500 expected. Conference Secretary-General, Professor Walter G. Whitman, of M.I.T., says it will rank in magnitude with any scientific conference ever held "and probably will rank above the others in interest and potential significance." Newsletter plans autumn coverage.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENCE IN UN HIGHLIGHTS CHURCHES' CELEBRATIONS JUNE 19 - OCT. 23

Lay leaders and clergy of 30 Protestant and Orthodox communions of the National Council of Churches, on June 8, in New York, reaffirmed faith in the United Nations as the world's strategic instrument for peace in the atomic age. In this General Board action the churchmen also declared that the U.N. and its agencies can serve to free newly independent peoples from the bondage and despair of poverty, hunger and disease.

Hailing the world organization on the eve of its tenth anniversary, to be celebrated June 19-26 and October 23-30, the churchmen meeting in New York as members of the Council's General Board declared:

"It is sometime said that because many of the hopes of San Francisco have not been fully realized, the United Nations has ceased to have meaning or reality. We hold the opposite to be true ... The United Nations is now more clearly seen as sheer necessity to avoid international anarchy and war."

"Above all," the message concluded, "we of the church proclaim that the United Nations is both a symbol and a method for strengthening the foundations of freedom, peace and security in the world; that it can help fulfill the promises of those unalienable rights with which the Creator has endowed His children."

The message draft was presented to the 250-member board by the Honorable Ernest A. Gross, New York, former U.S. Ambassador of the UN and present chairman of the National Council's Department of International Affairs.

JUNE 19 - FESTIVAL OF FAITH

The 1,000-word statement, adopted as an official pronouncement of the National Council of Churches, will be formally presented to the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, at a gigantic Festival of Faith to be held June 19 at San Francisco. The message will be presented to the Secretary of State in behalf of the churches by Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, Executive Director of the Department of International Affairs. The Festival, to be addressed by the Secretary of State, will also receive messages on the UN from other major faiths.

This festival will symbolize rededication of people of religions and churches across our land to those spiritual and moral principles which enabled Christians to take such outstanding leadership in creating and shaping the United Nations and in supporting it through the first decade of its service to the world. Dr. Van Kirk and others will represent the churches during that week at UN sessions and in significant observances by the Conference Group of Non-Governmental Organizations. Church councils there, along with sponsoring the mass meeting, plan with churches of San Francisco area on those Sundays to have in their pulpits outstanding international leaders. Many churches throughout the country also plan special services of worship and sermons for June 19 and June 26 appropriate to the anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter.

OCTOBER 23 - WORLD ORDER SUNDAY

A second highlight of the churches' celebration of the UN-Tenth Anniversary year will be World Order Sunday, October 23, opening United Nations Week. This special Sunday has become a meaningful tradition in the life of the churches across our land. It has special significance this year because it is the UN tenth anniversary and because the message to be used in the churches will be the official one presented to the Secretary of State. This message will be published in an attractive folder appropriate for distribution among congregations at worship on World Order Sunday. The folder will contain suggestions for further study and action, in observing the UN tenth anniversary year and in developing more fully the work of the churches in international affairs.

CHURCHES' SUPPORT OF NEGOTIATION BY U.S. WITH MAINLAND CHINA FAVORABLY RECEIVED

There has been a widespread response of appreciation for the telegrams supporting the policy of President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles sent by leaders in the National Council of Churches on April 27. These messages, released to the press and sent to religious leaders after delivery, commended the government's position of pursuing a resolute policy of honorable negotiation with the mainland government of China to seek solution of the Formosa Strait crisis and to relieve tensions in the Far East. Replies of gratitude were received from the administration. Letters of appreciation were also received from Senators and Congressmen. Leaders in various communions and in state and city councils of churches literally from coast to coast have indicated that they, too, took definite actions in resolutions, statements, letters, special deliveries, and wires as part of the widespread support the churches gave and continue to give to the government's avowed purpose to seek peaceful resolution of world problems. This series of events is an illustration of the enlightened and influential voice of the churches being heard in a positive way for seeking to translate Christian principles into international policies.

DISARMAMENT DEVELOPMENTS: UN SUBCOMMITTEE AND BIG 4: CHURCH OF SCOTLAND: STASSEN NOTE

In view of imminent consultation among the Big Four powers the Disarmament Subcommittee of the United Nations, after adjourning its London meetings on May 18, met at UN headquarters, New York, June 1, reported that it "discussed its future program of work," and is now awaiting further developments. The Soviets, having advanced a new proposal, which met certain of the requirements of previous Western proposals, pressed for continuing UN discussions. But the Subcommittee voted to postpone its discussion of specific programs for arms limitation and atomic control pending the Big Four meeting. This will undoubtedly have disarmament questions among its important issues.

In that same week, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in General Assembly at Edinburgh on May 30, had declared the basic need for universal disarmament. It disavowed unilateral disarmament "which might well increase rather than diminish the danger of war," but emphasized the necessity of international disarmament. "The continued designing of weapons of mass destruction and the piling up of armaments is fraught with the gravest peril...Peace among nations maintained only by mutual fear is utterly contrary to the purposes of God for mankind."

Meanwhile in response to the action of the Department of International Affairs of the NCC offering its good wishes and services to the Special Assistant to the President on Disarmament, the recently appointed official of cabinet rank, Harold E. Stassen, sent a letter of appreciation. He expressed his awareness of the difficulty of his task, his understanding of President Eisenhower's deep devotion to the objective of peace and his confidence that solutions can be found. He also said, "I am very much encouraged by the favorable worldwide reaction to the President's move." NCC Department continues to follow through in these matters in line with the concerns of the churches.

AMBASSADORS OF GOODWILL IS ONE ROLE OF PREACHERS ON INTERCHANGE

For the 29th consecutive year U.S. and British clergymen will visit each other's lands in the annual summertime preaching exchange. Eleven from the U.S. and nine from Britain will participate. They will address local church and church council groups, and national and regional conferences. The British clergymen have far-reaching itineraries in this country in 20 states, including the Pacific coast. In Britain, American ministers have engagements in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR: MUTUAL AID PROGRAM: RESERVES PLAN: REFUGEE RELIEF

The Mutual Aid Program: Is in hearings before House Foreign Affairs Committee, James P. Richards (D - S.C.) Chairman. It passed the Senate virtually unscathed on its first round. Main opposition in the House to date has come in the ideas that much should be in loans not grants and that Yugoslav aid should be overhauled in view of the recent Soviet trip to Belgrade. One Hoover Commission report, with considerable dissent, tended to encourage those holding that overseas aid should be drastically reduced rather than maintained or expanded to meet increasing crises and opportunities for mutual help in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This legislation includes: For Technical Cooperation, \$172 million, including \$24 million for the UN Expanded Program (\$8.5 million for July-December 1955 and \$15.5 for calendar year 1956). For the Organization of American States, \$1.5 million. For the UN Children's Fund, \$14.5 million (\$4.8 million of it for July-Dec. 1955). For the UN Refugee Fund, \$1.4 million for fiscal 1956. For Development Assistance, or Economic Aid, \$165 million. For President's Fund for Asian Economic Development, \$200 million, 50% to be loans.

In keeping with previously adopted policies, the National Council of Churches, with all its interested units, was represented in Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings particularly on technical cooperation. Dr. Luther A. Gotwald, Executive Secretary, Division of Foreign Missions, testified for the whole NCC. If this legislation passes the House, over mounting opposition, the real test will come in the second round, before the Appropriations Committees of Senate and House and appropriations votes in both chambers. It is important that the churches, already on record favoring aspects of this program, and individual members apprise Senators and Representatives of their concern.

National Reserve Plan: In House consideration of the compulsory military reserve legislation a fight over civil rights in the National Guard caused temporary shelving. Chairman Carl Vinson (D - Ga.) of the House Armed Services Committee withdrew it from a vote to avoid its defeat. Some suggest it may be put before Congress again, either on the House or Senate floor, under administration pressure near adjournment. The Senate, like the House, has passed a four year extension of the draft, (by voice vote). On the administration's National Reserve Plan, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Richard B. Russell (D - Ga.), a strong advocate of UMT, predicted the Senate would be willing, after hearings, to pass "a reasonable bill, as it has done before." The administration is increasing heavy pressures to get its reserve bill passed.

Church groups and individuals with a position on these matters have only a limited time to make their views known further to Senators and Representatives.

Refugee Relief Program: Continuing developments include these: On May 27 the President asked Congress to make ten changes in the law. Senator Watkins (R - Utah), introduced a bill embodying the President's recommendations. Senator Lehman (D - N.Y.) had introduced a bill earlier. Senate Committee hearings have been completed. Roland Elliott, Director of Immigration Services of Church World Service, testified for NCC before Senate Foreign Relations Sub-committee, (Senator Langer, R - N.C., Chairman), in favor of liberalizing the law and its administration. Erroneous impression is: Public opinion 20 to 1 opposes liberalizing and favors further restrictions. Churches are not being heard from. June 9 Secretary of State Dulles appointed Pierce J. Gerety to serve as Deputy Administrator of the Refugee Relief Act under the general jurisdiction of Scott McLeod, Chief of the State Department's Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs.

Three refugee responsibilities rest on churches and Christians: To advise the government in no uncertain terms of Christian concern for effective administration of such limited possibilities as are in the law. To advise Senators and Representatives of full support for much needed revision of the law. To multiply assurances from church groups to bring refugees to a new home and life in the U.S.

THEY ALSO SERVE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: MEDICAL MISSIONARIES CONFER

The significant story of how American Protestant churches are combatting disease around the world was reported at Atlantic City, N.J., by 75 missionary doctors and nurses home on furlough. They took part in the 25th Annual Conference on Medical Missions, June 9-13, sponsored by the Christian Medical Council for Overseas Work of the National Council of Churches. The conference followed immediately the annual meeting of the American Medical Association. Leaders in public health and in the treatment of diseases, found most frequently in the countries where missionaries serve, joined in symposia and work sessions.

The mass attack on disease in which these men and women lead for 50 American Protestant Mission Boards and church groups in other countries is carried out in 800 hospitals, 2,000 dispensaries, 4 medical colleges, one union medical training school, 15 tuberculosis sanatoria and 150 schools of nursing. The Council also aids in staffing and administering medical schools and institutes where nationals of the countries served are trained.

One of the most important aspects of the conference, Dr. Douglas N. Forman, secretary of the medical council, pointed out, is that it serves as a forum where missionary doctors and nurses from various parts of the world can consider their common concerns, share ideas and pass on solutions to some of their common problems. "Great emphasis was placed on the public health phase of their work this year," Dr. Forman said, "because each year a larger number of persons are being trained in community health work and the prevention of disease. This aspect has always been recognized as important, but in the past the pressure of ill persons needing care prevented missionary doctors from establishing as much community work as was needed." Conference sessions dealt with such topics as "Recent Advances in Therapy of Tropical Diseases," "Treatment of Leprosy" and "Population Control."

TO WATCH FOR: POSSIBLE WORLD COUNCIL STUDY ON THEOLOGICAL ISSUES AND ATOMS

In June the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches will take up a draft of plans submitted by the Division of Studies outlining possibilities for a commission to study the theological issues underlying the question of the attitude of the Church and Christian people to atomic war and related matters. This action was taken at the Executive Committee on the basis of a proposal by the Bishop of Chichester. Some of the factors and questions entering into the sense of need for such a study, as indicated in discussion in Executive Committee meeting, were these: The Church as "the people of God" live today in a world where nuclear war or threat of it is the most decisive fact. There is a quality of life peculiar to the people of God. Are there qualitative differences, involving a "new dimension" introduced by nuclear weapons, which mean restudy of Christian attitudes on such issues? Does the Christian witness on such issues differ from the ordinary responsibility of Christians in political matters, such as voting, influencing policy, etc., demanding a clear break, as in a pacifist position? Do Christians now need to face what they mean by "security"? Such issues have raised the question of a theological study and Christians of the world will be watching with interest what decisions may develop with regard to such a commission.

NOTE TO U.S. TOURISTS GOING ABROAD: YOU ARE AN AMBASSADOR

"U.S. tourists still leave poor impression abroad" was the headline of a recent United Press story. It stated that half a million Americans will visit Europe as tourists this year and along with receiving impressions will leave a lasting impact. A poll made throughout Western Europe revealed that the people in seven different countries have views of U.S. visitors which are not at all flattering. Americans in general and Christians in particular have a responsibility in their travels abroad to represent the best in human relationships.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? NEWS FROM COMMUNIONS, COUNCILS, AND LOCAL CHURCHES

YOUTH REPORT: In the United Christian Youth Movement, National Council of Churches, there has been continuing concern with world affairs. This is seen in two booklets published in past years, with much of their material still of value: Christian Youth and World Order (1949), and World Christian Citizenship Through United Christian Youth Action (1951). Recent and future items in their work include the following:

Young people on tour studied the U.S. Government and the UN in March. Protestant youth from 20 states spent five days in a National Citizenship Seminar, four days in Washington to get a "first hand look at what government leaders are doing about some of the major issues over which youth is concerned," and one day at UN Headquarters in New York on international affairs. The 60 young people focussed on learning more about such issues as juvenile delinquency, universal military training, segregation, civil liberties and foreign affairs. In Washington they visited government agencies dealing with those problems. Holding seminar type sessions, the delegates formulated strategies for state programs, according to Rev. John S. Wood, Associate Executive Director, Youth Work, and Associate Executive Secretary of UCYM, which sponsored this Seminar.

Many relevant projects of youth groups in local communities are described in an article, "Has This Happened Where You Live?" published in the International Journal of Religious Education, May 1955. The author is Rev. Donald O. Newby, Associate Executive Director, Youth Work, and Associate Executive Secretary of UCYM.

Plans of the UCYM for this summer call for 1,5000 of the nation's outstanding Christian young people to go to school at conferences on "the ecumenical church" to study and live out aspects of world-wide Christianity. In 17 training conferences across the U.S. they will have five days of lectures and roundtable discussions planning for cooperative Christian youth projects in states and communities across the nation and preparing for further leadership in the cooperative church movement in their own states and home towns. These conferences will provide young people an understanding of the World Church through interdenominational, interracial and international fellowship. The "ecumenical students" will be local and state youth council officers and leaders of denominational youth groups. Conferences will be held in Colorado, Ohio, Florida, Iowa, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, New Hampshire and Wisconsin. Concluding the program will be a national UCYM meeting for state and denominational leaders at Williams Bay, Wisc., Aug. 28-Sept. 4.

Such programs as this directed by Mr. Newby, and those directed by Mr. Wood and Rev. A. Wilson Cheek, Executive Director, Youth Work, and Executive Secretary of UCYM, suggest the ongoing interest of the United Christian Youth Movement, and of young people, in the world church and in international Christian concerns.

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE of Southern Ohio, through its Committee on World Order, mimeographed, earlier this year, a series of excellent discussion guides on four subjects: "Strengthening the U.N.," "Disarmament," "Communism in the World," and "Less Developed Areas of the World." Each Guide, about 8 pages long, contains a section of background materials and an agenda of stimulating questions; the last three contain a selected list of materials for further study. These guides were planned for groups in the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio; they would be of value to other church groups planning programs on these concerns. They were brought to our attention by Rev. M. Moran Weston, Executive Secretary of the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church. For further information, write to: Committee on World Order, c/o The Venerable David R. Thornberry, The Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio, 412 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati 2, Ohio

RESOURCES: PAMPHLETS, BOOKS, ARTICLES

BOOKLET: Plowshares and Pruning Hooks is a valuable resource for summer conferences and for planning programs for the next church year. It is available for use by any church, councils of churches, or groups in any denomination now. It was originally planned and is being used in Methodist churches as part of their Crusade for World Order. Copies may now be obtained by others from Rev. Charles Boss, 740 Rush Street, Chicago 11, at a cost of 50¢ each. This attractive illustrated booklet of 94 pages, contains an Introduction by G. Bromley Oxnam and 3 chapters: "The Meaning of Peace" by Ralph W. Sockman, "The United Nations" by O. Frederick Nolde and "Disarmament" by Walter W. Van Kirk. Recommended as study guide, text book or individual reading.

ORDER NOW: Church Service Folders for World Order Sunday, October 23. Colorful, 4 pages, contains: A cover with UN Tenth Anniversary symbol in bright blue; official National Council statement on "The Churches and the Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations"; suggestions for observing World Order Day; UN Tenth Anniversary year. It will be of present and historic significance to put in the hands of congregations World Order Day, Oct. 23. Order before the rush; approximate cost - \$2.50 per hundred; 5¢ single copy; from National Council of Churches, 120 East 23rd St., N.Y. 10, N.Y.

STUDY GUIDE: During the summer many religious leaders will be setting up programs for next year in local churches, church groups, or councils of churches. We remind our readers of the excellent study guide for a course of 7 sessions, published in April, on the continuing work of the ecumenical movement: Every Church and Evanston. Cost: 50¢ plus 5¢ for mailing; or 12-24 @ 45¢ ea., 25 or more @ 40¢ ea. postage prepaid. It is for use with the Report of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Evanston Speaks. One copy of both booklets, \$1.00, postage prepaid. Order from National Council, 120 East 23rd Street, N.Y. 10, N.Y.

EDITORIAL: "Christian Faith and the International Situation" by John A. Mackay in Theology Today, April 1955, Vol. XII, No. 1, sets four propositions which he calls "basic principles which have a bearing upon the present international scene."

1. The search for absolute security destroys life's spiritual foundations.
2. When persons or peoples are estranged from one another, there is no substitute for direct dialogue between them.
3. The restoration of world order demands the rediscovery of forgiveness.
4. The failure of enemies to be reconciled need not prevent them inhabiting the same world.

The framework in which these propositions are set is described by Mackay in this way: "Christian faith brings to the study of human affairs the perspective of changeless values and the illumination which flows from surveying the life and history of man in the light of God and his purpose in Christ."

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